

Interview with Ken Hanson
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Hanson: See, this guy was a big guy; he must have been this wide at the shoulders. I don't know if he was, but those epaulets on his shoulders probably made it seem that way. But he was a big man. And he was a left-hander, too, so he'd come around like that and hit me, and I'd go rolling over.

DePue: So like a hook punch.

Hanson: Yeah. And he was sitting there, and then he had me sit there with my legs crossed, you know, Korean-style.

DePue: Were you sitting on the floor during all of this.

Hanson: Yeah. Well, Oriental custom is to take your shoes off before you go into living quarters, and I had left my boots outside on the step kind of out there, outside this door. Then at one point, he took one of the copper spoons, and he put the handle up through like that, and held the fingers together at the tips, like—and then he turned that spoon handle in there...

DePue: Did he put the spoon between your fingers?

Hanson: The handle. The edges of these spoons are very sharp, because they're just stamped out of a piece of copper. He was twisting that in there like this, you know, and I could just hear the ligaments and stuff being scraped in my finger. To this day, I have trouble with that, because I guess the blood vessels break very easily in there, and it gets black...

DePue: Right at the base of the joint between the index and the middle finger there?

Hanson: Yeah, right here. The blood vessels break, and it gets black and blue.

DePue: Well, that must have been excruciating, because there's nowhere in the body that has more nerve endings than in the hands.

Hanson: Right, fingers and... yeah. And another time, he had me stand up; then the interpreter pulled my pant leg up to the knee, and he had a piece of tree bark there that he'd taken all the bark off too, so he had just the piece of sappy fiber, and he would slap me on the calves with the piece of fiber. I looked down once, and I could see blood bubbles standing out on my calves.

DePue: On the back of your legs, you were talking about.

Hanson: Yeah. Well, he would slap from the front, and then it would whip around and hit me in the back of the leg, yeah.